

April 2000

# The *LINK*



*Stansted  
Mountfitchet*

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## GRAPHIC DESIGN

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EXHIBITIONS/DISPLAYS

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## FUNERAL DIRECTORS GOODCHILD

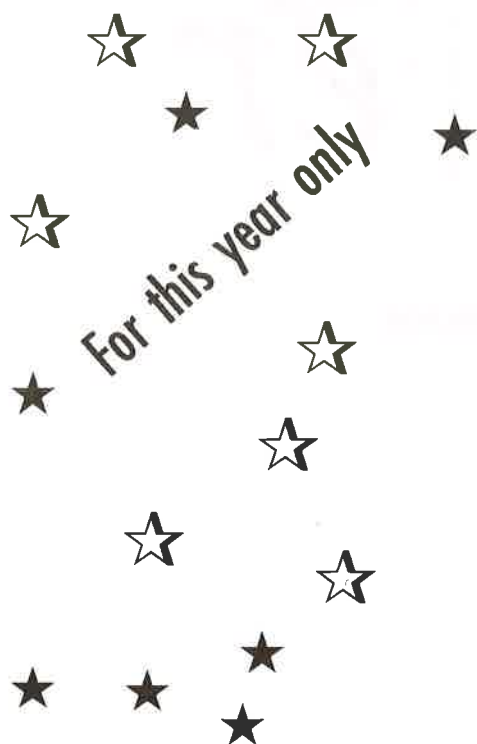
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# The Great Millennium **GOOD FRIDAY PROJECT**

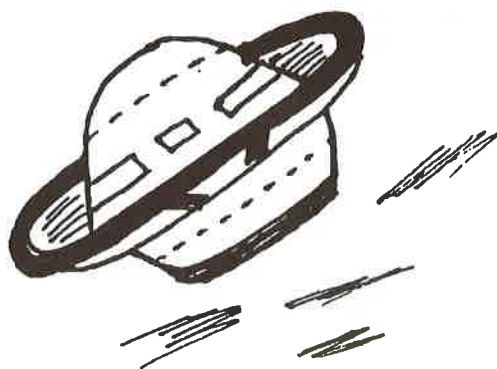
Friday 21st April

Assemble at St. Mary's School  
at 9 a.m.

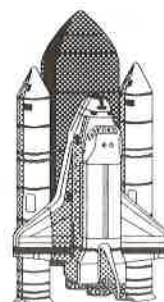
Service to follow in St. John's Church  
at 3 p.m.

Revealing the *true* meaning of the  
Millennium

A forward-looking day  
for children ~ and adults too



Soaring into the future



Booking forms available from local  
schools or 62 Chapel Hill. Tel 812284

**The Link (price £3 per year) is published monthly by Churches Together in Stansted**  
Advertising enquiries to Angela Wall Tel 01279 817978  
All other enquiries to Janet Townsend Tel 01279 812593

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## **MEDITATION**

Our friends, Harry & Edna, recently went to see the mediaeval mystery plays at the National Theatre, London. In the plays, both God and the devil appear as people on the stage. I remember a child at school telling me once that God is good with the 'o' and the devil is evil without the 'd'.

This is the most basic theme in any drama, good versus evil, whether it be villains in pantomimes that we all like to 'boo', or Westerns of the 50s where the good cowboys wore white hats, the baddies, black hats. In today's Gospel of Jesus being tempted in the Wilderness, the great cosmic drama unfolds with good personified in the person of Jesus, opposing the forces of evil in the person of the devil.

In the Zoroastrian faith, the forces of good and evil are evenly matched, fighting for control of the world. But in the Christian faith, there is the belief that good will always defeat evil. This does not mean that the struggle will not be hard or costly, nor does it mean that the defeat is always obvious. Sometimes the forces of evil seem never-ending and so wearing that it is impossible to sustain the struggle. That must have been the situation facing Jesus after 40 days and 40 nights of fasting when the devil offered easy solutions to deal with his hunger and his mission to save the world. Jesus rejects each temptation in turn, summing up strength to do so and quoting Deuteronomy, telling the devil that what he offered was contrary to God's will.

In the Garden of Eden, the devil, symbolised by the serpent had offered easy solutions to Adam and Eve. Using deceit and dishonesty, he pandered to their pride by telling them that they could be like God if they ate of the apple of the tree of good and evil. Jesus teaches that, indeed, we can be like God but in a different and more difficult way, by emptying self and giving self over to God in the service of others. In another garden, the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus faced his greatest temptation not to follow his Father's will, which would involve horrendous suffering and death, but re-echoing the replies to the devil in the Wilderness, Jesus said, "Not my will, but thine be done". Only by accepting what was going to happen to him could Jesus show the world the unselfish and total giving of the love of the Father.

In the events of Good Friday, it appears that the forces of evil have won, the forces of betrayal, the lack of moral courage, spite, cruelty, intolerance and injustice. And yet, it is in the very weakness of the Cross, that God's strength is apparent and is confirmed by the victory over the forces of darkness in the Resurrection.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites wandered for 40 years in the Wilderness before reaching the salvation of the Promised Land. Jesus fasted for 40 days and 40 nights in the Wilderness before beginning the ministry which would lead to the salvation of the world. During the period of 40 days and 40 nights in this season of Lent, we are challenged to go out into our own Wilderness to face the forces of darkness in our own lives, and what are these forces? - anything that holds us back from the person that God wanted us to be when he created us in the Garden of Eden before the Fall. Do we choose the beautiful and the ennobling, or do we choose the destructive, the ugly or the degrading? The challenge we face is to recognise and face up to those aspects of our character and being that are vulnerable to evil's erosion of our true nature and destiny, which is to be with God. The goal at the end of this season of Lent is to share in Jesus' victory over the forces of darkness, and to join him into breaking into eternal life with God for which we were originally created.

David Morson

# UNITED REFORMED

## Chapel Hill

### Ministers

Rev'd David Simpson  
28 Linton Close  
Saffron Walden  
Tel 01799 526618

Rev'd Lydia Rapkin  
23a St John's Close  
Saffron Walden  
Tel 01799 523296

**Contact** Mrs Janet Townsend  
58 Chapel Hill  
Tel 01279 812593

### Services for April

2nd	11am	Rev L Rapkin	Mothering Sunday
9th	11am	Rev D Simpson	
	6.30pm	CTS	Agape in the Lecture Hall
16th	11am	Rev D Simpson	Communion
20th	7.30pm	Maundy Thursday	Communion Rev D Simpson
21st	11am	Good Friday at Clavering	Rev L Rapkin & Rev D Simpson
23rd	10.30am	Easter Day Group Service	Rev L Rapkin followed by coffee
26th	8pm	Millennium Service at Quaker Meeting House	arranged by Methodists
30th	11am	Rev J Benfield	
April 17th	2.30pm	Monday Meeting	
April 27th	8 pm	Social Evening	All Welcome !

At our May Cake Stall (May 6th) we will be also selling books, bric-a-brac and coffee for our Repair and Redevelopment Fund.

Hope to see you there at 10 am.

### From the Rev'd David Simpson

"I'm sorry, I got it wrong" is not a phrase one often hears from politicians and I am beginning to understand why. Is it just me or have you too noticed recently how some television and radio news presenters during one-to-one interviews are becoming increasingly more cynical and negative? Thorough questioning is important, critical debate is the keystone of the democratic process and interviewers are asking questions on behalf of their audience, but it seems to me that all too many interviews dissolve into fiascos as a result of the interviewer's hostile and often offensive manner.

You know the style of aggressive interview techniques I mean where interviewees are not given the chance to reply

to a question and find themselves in a defensive position through having to appeal to the interviewer for an opportunity to answer the last question put to them. Politicians may have given themselves a bad name over recent decades but does this mean that they no longer do anything right or well? After all, most people do their job of work conscientiously with usually the best intentions, yet all politicians are seemingly painted with the same brush. There seems to be no allowance made for human error. Perhaps news presenters don't make them!

Who would wish to do Jack Straw's job, for example? He and his staff have recently been positively savaged by presenters, yet decisions were eventually made over Pinochet and Tyson and whether or not we approve or disapprove, clear messages for the future emerged; there are no hiding places anymore in this shrinking world and those entering our islands should note well.

When did you last hear any words of encouragement for William Hague? Do political leaders not require any reassurance or affirmation in their roles? One understands why Tony Blair describes his position as a lonely one. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer recently announced the measures he was taking to release the debt of the third world countries instead of the news being received with joy, in the interview I saw, he was continually challenged as if he had committed a public outrage! Is it not possible that some things may be done without ulterior motives and for all the right reasons?

As long as humans are around and about in this world there will always be errors made and as long as we continue to learn from our mistakes there is hope for the human race.

But we all need encouragement and support when we do get things right, even politicians!

---

He  
is risen  
from  
the dead  
and He  
is Lord

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## Traditionalists on the edge

Coming to the end of Lent, I believe Lent has some very important lessons for us to take with us as a church for our journey together.

We are now living in a period where our culture can no longer be assumed to be even implicitly Christian. On a recent visit to the Millennium Dome I witnessed a dance and gymnastic spectacle acting out a story of conflict and reconciliation between Earth and Sky people over a romance between a couple from each tribe. There were all sorts of allusions both Classical and Native American which I thought I recognised, but no Christian echoes at all. I realised that we now live in a world where the 2000th anniversary of Jesus Christ can be marked without any reference to him at all in the popular mind.

The task of the church now is to engage in something like the wilderness reflection we observe during Lent.

Jesus went into the wilderness, possibly on something like a Native American Vision Quest, to have an internal dialogue with the history of his people, his forty days reflecting the forty years in which his ancestors travelled from slavery in Egypt to become the new nation, Israel.

A Vision Quest is an outward journey to edges of society, it is an inner journey to encounter yourself under

duress and of purification for a task, and a journey 'in the spirit' to discover the identity and destiny of your people.

Jesus, like his ancestors, struggled in the wilderness to understand what it is God wanted him to be. Jesus retraced the steps of his tradition to its place of origins in the hope of discovering what went wrong. In the temptations he is forced into facing the forces which lured them into idolatry and injustice, because to forge a different future he must confront the past.

Like Jesus, the church must do the same. It must have a dialogue with its tradition, understand its past strengths and weaknesses, and forge a future which carries the spirit of the past to forge a new future.

This involves us all becoming *traditionalists*. Not traditionalists in the shallow Daily Telegraph way of thinking which thinks tradition is about maintaining religion in the style of one's old prep school, but traditionalists who know intimately the pulse and force of what Jesus came to bring, and have eyes to recognise where he is moving now.

AS

## Holy Week and Easter

### April 16th Palm Sunday

8:00am Holy Communion  
9:30am Blessing of Palms, Procession & Parish Communion  
11:00am Family Service  
6:30pm Music & Readings for Passiontide  
at St. Mary's Church, Stansted

### April 17th Monday

7:30pm Stations of the Cross and Holy Communion

### April 18th Tuesday

7:30pm Stations of the Cross and Holy Communion

### April 19th Wednesday

7:30pm Stations of the Cross and Holy Communion

### April 20th Maundy Thursday

8:00pm Holy Communion 8:30pm-11:00pm Vigil

### April 21st Good Friday

9:00am-3:30pm Children's Good Friday Holiday Project  
(See CTS page for details)

6:00pm Procession of Witness from Lower Street to St. Theresa's Catholic Church, Millside

8:00pm Night Prayer and Meditation  
St. Mary's, Birchanger

### Holy Saturday

8:00pm First Communion of Easter and Confirmation with the Bishop of Colchester

### Easter Day

8:00am Holy Communion  
9:30am Parish Communion

### St. John's Diary

Sundays	8:00am Holy Communion <i>said</i> Rite B 9:30am Parish Communion <i>sung</i> Rite A 6:30pm Evening Prayer <i>said</i>
	11:00am Family Service on the third Sunday of the month
Wednesdays	10:00am Holy Communion <i>said</i> Rite B followed by coffee 7:30pm Intercessions and Night Prayer

*(Except the last Wednesday of this month when there will be an ecumenical service at the Friends Meeting House, led by the Methodists at 8:00pm)*

**Tiny Tots** is a Mother and Toddler group which meets fortnightly at 2:00pm in church. Co-ordinator Mrs. Margaret Duly 816053.

**Laser Group** is a 12-16 youth group which meets fortnightly on Sunday evenings at 8:00pm for activities in the church hall. The evening concludes with candlelit Night Prayer in the chapel in church. Contact Mrs Katy Dockerill 812997.

All enquiries are welcome at The Benefice Office located in the Upper Room, St. John's Church Hall, Stansted CM24 8JP

Monday	Open from
Wednesday	9:00am
Friday	-12:00noon

(01279)

815243

<benefice.office@stansted.net>

Administrator

**Mrs Elizabeth Jennings**

Church Hall Bookings Secretary

**Mrs Joy Lambe**

(01279) 817937

<joy@stansted.net>

Rector

**Revd Andrew Spurr**

The Rectory

5 St. John's Road

Stansted Mountfitchet

Essex, CM24 8JP

phone/fax (01279) 812203

<rector@stansted.net>

Assistant Curate

From July 2nd 2000

43 Gilbey Crescent

Stansted Mountfitchet

Essex, CM24 8DT

<curate@stansted.net>

Honorary Assistant Priest

**Canon Derek Jackson**

88 Stansted Road

Bishop's Stortford

Herts, CM23 2DZ

phone (01279) 652664

Director of Music

**Mrs Glynis Morris**

Wakeley

Leetes Lane

Eversden

Cambs, CB3 7HH

phone/fax (01223) 263640

<benefice.music@stansted.net>

## From the Registers

February  
2000

Feb 1st: Winifred Dora Brett, aged 92  
Feb 11th Ivy Hilda Kathleen Charles, aged 9.  
Feb 24th Isabel Lorna Bishop, aged 79

## Funerals



# ROMAN CATHOLIC

St Theresa's, Stansted with St Anthony's

**Priest** Father Joe White  
The Presbytery  
12 Millside  
Stansted  
Tel 01279 814349

**Masses** Saturday 6.00 pm  
Sunday 9 am and 10.30 am

Holy Days of Obligation  
8 am and 8 pm

Tuesday 9.30 am  
- Saturday

## Confessions

Saturday 10 am  
and by appointment

## Baptisms

By appointment

As we begin the season of Lent in this great Jubilee year, our Bishop has asked us to make a special effort to confess and seek forgiveness for the times when we have failed to live up to the values of the Gospel. The need for repentance and reconciliation to God has been emphasised in an unprecedented act by the Pope. At a Day of Repentance ceremony in St Peter's in Rome, he has asked for forgiveness for the failures of the Catholic Church in the past, for such events as the Crusaders and the Inquisition and for the Church's treatment of the Jewish people and other ethnic minorities.

These are indeed scars on the face of Christianity, but while Christianity has not always lived up to its own ideals, it has survived for two thousand years. The Faith zone at the Millennium Dome is interesting for the emphasis it gives to the profound and enduring influences for good that Christianity has had on the history and development of the British Isles. In a number of short videos, practising Christians describe how our landscape has been defined by abbeys, monasteries, cathedrals and churches and how our legal, educational and healthcare systems have their roots in, and continue to be influenced by, Christianity.

As we start the third millennium we hope that future generations will not be compelled to ask forgiveness for our actions as the Church in our time. This prayer by Lancelot Andrews, one of the translators of the Authorised or King James' Version of the Bible, speaks to me of the ideal:

"Thank you Lord for my mind and for those who can see into your mind. For my innermost self and my ability to praise you. For my freedom and the wisdom of the past which helps me choose well."

Ruth Rawlinson

# METHODIST

Meets in Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

**Minister** Rev'd John Graham  
2 South Road  
Bishop's Stortford  
Tel 01279 654475

**Secretary** Mrs Catherine Dean  
49 Recreation Ground  
Stansted  
Tel 01279 813579

## Preachers and Services for April

2nd Margaret Richardson  
9th Louise Dean  
16th Rev John Graham  
23rd Easter Sunday - Rev Ronald Crews -  
Holy Communion  
30th Julie Finbow

Our Church Council business meeting will be held on 14th April at 8 pm.

We shall also be sharing in the Agape on 9th April at 6.30 pm at the United Reformed Church Hall and in the Good Friday walk of witness at 6pm from Lower Street and Stations of the Cross at St Theresa's Church.

## GOOD FRIDAY PROJECT

APRIL 21st 2000 AD

**Calling all children.**

**Please book your place on "The Great Millennium Good Friday Project" and zoom into the future.**

**Booking forms have been delivered to all the schools during March.**

**Your passports for this spectacular event will be circulated in April.**

**Don't miss this exciting day.**

**To all adults** - Adult helpers are needed for Good Friday. Please contact Marion Johnson, tel. no. 812284.

Lots of hot cross buns are needed for Good Friday. These can be delivered to 62 Chapel Hill for freezing.

We also need tubes from kitchen rolls and cooking foils. These can be placed in the box at the back of St John's Church.

Thank you,

Marion G Johnson

# SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

**Clerk** Mrs Anthea Lee  
24 Lea Close  
Bishop's Stortford  
Tel 01279 656707

**Meeting** 11 am

## Light

This extract which was written in 1656 is from the introduction to the Advices and Queries, which are a series of statements that challenge and inspire Quakers in their personal and religious life. "Dear Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule to walk by, but that all, with the measure of light which is pure and holy, may be guided; and so in the light walking and abiding, these may be fulfilled in the Spirit, not from the letter, for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life".

I feel that our garden will benefit from more light and that it will grow in kind, as well as spirit, and that we can walk in our garden and hopefully also grow spiritually in that light.

Peter Burgess

# Christian Aid

**We believe in life before death**

## Second Appeal !

Calling all those out there who could spare a few hours in May. Volunteer envelope collectors are still required so that we can cover the whole village. The dates are 14th-20th May. Please let me know if you can help.

This year's Christian Aid Week collection should be even higher than the record achievement in 1999. The Chancellor, Gordon Brown, has announced that tax can be claimed on all donations to charity, however large or small. This means that charities can claim 28% extra for every gift from a taxpayer; turning every £1 into £1.28. This could add £1 million to the house-to-house collection. However, to claim back the tax Christian Aid must have:

A name  
An address  
An amount

So there will be room on the Christian Aid envelope for these details. We ask all taxpayers to please fill in the form so that Christian Aid can make your money count for more.

Bakers and gardeners - please remember the Christian Aid Market on 20th May. Cakes and plants are our best sellers.

Catherine Dean - 813579



**CHURCHES  
TOGETHER  
in STANSTED**

## Diary

Friday 7th April - final session of Lent course entitled "Believing" at 8 pm at the Friends Meeting House.

Sunday 9th April at 6.30 pm an Agape supper at the United Reformed Church Hall.

Good Friday - Walk of witness from Lower Street at 6 pm and Stations of the Cross at St Theresa's Church.

Wednesday 26th April - Millennium Service a 8 pm at the Friends Meeting House (led by Methodists).

## CHEVETOGNE 2000

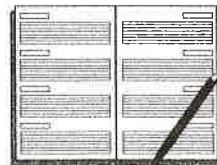
### The Jubilee Year Exchange 1-4 June 2000

Make your jubilee pilgrimage to Chevetogne, share with and exchange friendship and Christian fellowship with the parish of Chevetogne in Belgium.

For under £100 you can enjoy a weekend in the company of our friends in Chevetogne, staying with a host family.

Contact Eileen on 812109 or Francis on 813945 to reserve a place or for more details and information.

Space is limited and all places are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.



## VILLAGE DIARY

### Editor's note

The recent coincidence of two Quizzes in Stansted on the same evening serves to remind us of the benefits to be gained from using the Village Diary which lives in the vestibule of the Library. To be fair, more organisations are taking advantage of it in the period since the Diary returned from the Parish Council Office, but it obviously has not yet become recognised by all organisers. There is another benefit. If an entry is in the Diary by our closing date in the previous month it will be automatically picked up by the Link team and appear (*fred*) in our Village Events.



**Bentfield CP School  
CHILDREN'S FASHION SHOW**

6.30 pm Mon 3rd April

Show lasts approx 30 mins

Tickets £2 (discounts for families)  
from the school or tel

Natalie 815769 Michaela 815796

*Clothes to purchase after the show*



**Stansted Evening WI**

**JUMBLE SALE**

2 pm Sat 15th April

St John's Hall

**Admission FREE**

Refreshments ~ Raffle

Cake Stall

Tel 812725 for jumble collection



Stansted  
Liberal Democrats

**QUIZ  
NIGHT**

7.30 for 8 pm Sat 15th April

Memorial Hall, Elsenham

Tickets £4 incl refreshments

Tel 813080 or 813432

**VILLAGE EVENTS**

**April**

2 Sun	Car Boot Sale Windmill open	Mountfitchet Sch 8 am - noon 2 - 6 pm
3 Mon	Children's Fashion Show Shalom Group	Bentfield School 6.30 pm 7 Blythwood Gdns 8 pm
5 Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
6 Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
9 Sun	Rainbow 'Easter' Party	St John's Hall
10 Mon	Kid's Clothes Show	St Mary's School
13 Thu	Carers' Support Group Conservative Supper W I	Quaker Meeting Hse 2 - 4 pm Old Mill Hse Restaurant 8 pm St John's Hall 7.45 pm
15 Sat	W I Jumble Sale Liberal Democrat Quiz	St John's Hall 2 pm Elsenham Memorial Hall 8 pm
17 Mon	Shalom Group	7 Blythwood Gdns 8 pm
17 Mon to 20 Thu	Skip	Railway Sidings 7.30 am - 3 pm
19 Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
20 Thu	RBL Women's Section	Day Centre 7.30 pm
21	Good Friday Millennium Project / Service	St Mary's Sch 9 am / 3 pm
23	Easter Day Green Waste Skip Windmill open	Railway Sidings 1 - 4 pm 2 - 6 pm
24 Mon	Windmill open	2 - 6 pm
29 Sat to 3 May Wed	Open Weekend	Arthur Findlay College 10 am
30 Sun	Windmill open	2 - 6 pm

**May**

1 Mon	Windmill open	2 - 6 pm
3 Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
4 Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
6 Sat	Cake & Book Stall Carnival Committee Quiz	Outside URC 10 am Mountfitchet Sch 7.30 for 8 pm
7 Sun	St Mary's Church open Windmill open	2 - 6 pm 2 - 6 pm
11 Thu	W I	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
13 Sat	W I Outing to Sandringham Junior Football Presentation	Meet at Sworders 9 am Mountfitchet School (evening)
14 Sun	Christian Aid Week begins Windmill open	2 - 6 pm
23 Tue	PTA Fashion Show	Mountfitchet School 7.30 pm



**Stansted Windmill  
Open Days 2 - 6 pm**

Sunday 2nd April

Sunday 23rd April

Monday 24th April

Sunday 30th April

Monday 1st May

Sunday 7th May

**HOMEMADE CAKES,  
BRIC-À-BRAC,  
BOOKS & COFFEE**

10 am Sat 6th May

outside the

United Reformed Church



Chapel Hill

(in church if wet)

**Stansted Carnival Committee**



**General  
Knowledge  
Quiz**

7.30 for 8 pm Sat 6th May

Mountfitchet High School

Bar ~ Tickets £6

incl Ploughmans

from 'Dog & Duck' or tel 815904



**Coach Outing to  
Sandringham**

Sat 13th May - 9 am Sworders

(journey time approx 2½ hrs)

Departs Sandringham 3 pm

Cost (incl admission) £11.70

Concessions £10.80

**Tel Pearl Wellings 813614**

**All Welcome**

Organised by Stansted Evening W I

**Stansted Parish Council Skip Dates**

**Mon - Thurs**

7.30 am - 3 pm

17 - 20 April

15 - 18 May

**Weekends**

7.30 am - 3 pm

10 - 11 June

**Green Waste**

1 - 4 pm

Sun 23 April

Sat 20 May



# Shalom

## Meetings for April

3rd April            Venue: 7 Blythwood Gardens  
Talk by David Morson

17th April           7 Blythwood Gardens  
Agape led by Mary Warnett

All welcome - just turn up!

**Corrymeela** - The Well Known Reconciliation Centre in Northern Ireland

The raffle in aid of Corrymeela raised £90. Thankyou to everyone who bought a ticket.

The prize winners were:

Ruth Rawlinson - 'Grace' - Nick Quinn - Eileen Quinn - Pat Simpson - Frances Roberts - Derek Honour - Ann Owen - Margaret Whitelaw.

Unfortunately the proposed dance had to be cancelled but another fund raising event will be held later in the year.

## Weekend at Hengrave Hall

Members of the 'Shalom' group met for their annual retreat at Hengrave Hall, Suffolk, at the end of February, with our retreat leader, Father John Glynn, of the House of Prayer near Brentwood. The community of sisters at the hall was as welcoming as always, and the serene and beautiful atmosphere of the house and its surroundings is always inspiring. During the weekend we enjoyed walking in the garden and visiting the church and going for a longer walk in the Suffolk countryside. There were times for chatting and socialising and times to be on our own with our own thoughts.

During the weekend, Father John developed his theme of 'Open the Door', illustrating and accompanying his talks with his own compositions sung to the guitar. We were encouraged to look at our own lives and to think about the ways in which we could move forward through opening doors, just as Alice in Wonderland had looked from the room of locked doors through the tiny door to the beautiful garden beyond. In order to move forward we need to love ourselves and then come to love God. We need to accept ourselves and to know that 'faith is the courage to accept acceptance'. We were reminded that we should find time and space for ourselves and also for prayer - the busier our lives, the longer that period of quiet should be.

'All things are possible ...': do Christians really believe this today? It is up to us to take new steps and 'open doors', both in our personal lives and in our relations with other Christians and those of all faiths. In the words of the last refrain of Father John's song:

"Go through the door  
What do you see?  
Yours is the choice  
What will it be?"

Margaret Whitelaw



## THE VILLAGE MUSIC CLUB

### THE MILLENNIUM CONCERT

What distinguished the visit of the Alburni Quartet to St John's Church on March 11th was that rare thing, a sense of occasion. As Parish Council Chairman, Ray Clifford, said, 'Quality, quality, quality'. The Quartet have a world-wide reputation which was certainly upheld by their rendering of Mozart's Quartet in B Flat 'The Hunt', Puccini's Crisantomi, Dvorak's two Waltzes Op 54 and Borodin's Quartet No. 2 in D.

Almost 300 people first enjoyed an excellent reception in the Hall which was hosted by the Parish Council before taking up almost every seat in the Church. At the conclusion of the performance, Peter Pople (violin) described the Quartet's instruments, the earliest of which dates from the 16th century.

Stansted is astonishingly fortunate in having a group of enthusiasts who, having first formed the Village Music Club, continue to provide us with up to four concerts a year which embrace a spread of music to suit a wide variety of tastes and all of them to an admirable standard. We owe the nine-strong committee a debt of gratitude and the promise of future support. This can be readily achieved by joining the Club and so gaining the advantage of favourable admission costs.

Well done, all of you who contributed to a memorable evening.

Derek Honour



## ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Following my newsletters of recent months where I have mentioned the question of the Budget settlement for 2000/2001, members will have noted my gloomy predictions that an increase in Council Tax was likely. On Tuesday 15th February the Council met and after much debate settled the Budget at an increase of 8.3% above last year (an additional cost to the average household in Essex of some £55 per annum). This increase is dictated by the fact that the Administration Group, who currently are in power in County Hall, wish to spend some £45M more than the Government's Standard Spending Allowance (SSA), and had planned a budget increase of some 9.9%. This decision attracted also a Government "fine" or penalty for exceeding the SSA of some £2.5M. The ruling Administration Group wished to do this in the face of Government direction, mainly because they are unable to bring themselves to introduce adjustments and changes on current spending, primarily in Social Services and Education, which would allow more economical methods to be introduced. The Conservative Group disagreed with the proposal and won the vote, supported by one Independent Member.

As a result, a budget of 8.3% has been set. This decision will mean some cost cutting in services but by less than the 9.9% which had been proposed and will be based largely on economies made in the management of absenteeism and unusual sickness; matter which can be resolved by better supervision and procedures and also by the welcome fall in the inflation which will provide a significant margin of savings over the coming financial year.

Further and fuller details on this matter will, of course, be published in due course. Readers now should be aware of this and be prepared. When inflation is currently at almost 2.5% and falling and pension increases are likely to be in the order of 75p per week, the coming charges will not make pleasant reading, but they are at least less than they might have been.

Should readers wish to know more about this matter they should contact me on 01279 812471.

Richard Wallace



## UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

### Boundary Changes

The Stansted ward is unique amongst the 31 wards which make up Uttlesford District Council. It is the only one to return three members and has the largest electorate. This stood at 4392 in 1999 and with the Rochford's and other developments is projected to rise to 4958 by 2004. Some idea of how the ward has grown can be seen from 1976 data when Stansted's electorate stood at 3521. Boundary changes in the 1980's which brought electors from Stoney Common and West Road into the Stansted ward from Birchanger have contributed to this increase.

The Local Government Commission have commenced an electoral review of Uttlesford. The aim is to make sure, where possible, that within each local authority area every councillor represents the same number of electors, taking into account the identities and interests of local communities in the area. This is the first electoral review since Uttlesford's formation in the 1970's and inevitably anomalies have arisen. The Commission expects to publish draft recommendations for consultation this summer. Following public consultation of the draft recommendations, the Commission will make recommendations to the Government. This would take effect in time for the next District Council elections in 2003.

Uttlesford's own submission to the Commission recommends that Stansted be divided into a Stansted North and Ugley Ward and a Stansted South Ward. Each would return two councillors. Stansted South would broadly be that area of the village south of the railway station. Personally, I believe the Council's recommendations to be a mistake. The Rochford's site would as proposed be split between two parishes and two electoral wards. This would cause artificial divisions. Anomalies are already present; for example, half of Rochford Close is now in the Birchanger ward together with two houses in Stoney Place. There is an urgent need for a parish boundary review which I and my colleagues will be pressing for. It is also I feel wrong, as does Ugley Parish Council, to include that village with Stansted.

Whatever the outcome, of one thing we can be sure. The speed at which society is changing means that change is about to become one of the few constants of local government.

Cllr Geoffrey Sell



## ROOM FOR A VIEW ?

These are not the observations of a naturalist but of one who lives in the countryside - its hills and lakes and coasts, but also the beauty of near and intimate landscapes around Stansted.

Here are some of my favourite views, looking in towards or outward from this village. You can add your own as you stroll around - or even drive!

1. At the top (north) end of High Lane, looking east towards the airport (invisible) - folded hills crowned by woodlands.
2. From the north end of Cambridge Road, after Five Acres. a new gap in the right hand hedge gives the same but longer view.
3. The classic Stansted vista: from the top of Chapel Hill down and up to Parsonage Farm: once, a pattern of cows against the green hillside - no longer!
4. Up Grove Hill, take the footpath after the last cottages on left. On the common are diverging little paths and a seat on the right. Look north towards Norman House, Alsa Street and Ugley. The little 'valley' of the Stansted Brook (so small before it goes underground at Gall End and emerges at the station) - truly restful, long vista. And leftwards (westwards) to Stansted village.
5. Or from St Mary's Church take the footpath by the Manor House and look across the (invisible) railway line to the village. From the train ! enjoy the watery meadowscapes towards Stansted Hall.
6. Leaving Bentfield End pond towards Bentfield Bower, the footpath straight ahead at the road junction by Hole Farm will lead to fine views out towards Hassobury and Hazel End and, looking back, to the windmill.
7. Last of 'my' views: from Pennington Lane, across the (almost invisible) old A11 towards Orford House and Ugley. Good viewing to all!

Phyllis Harrison

Phyllis's selection could be the basis for a series of photographs depicting local scenes - what do you think?



Editor



The National Childbirth Trust

Education for Parenthood

March has flown by as always, we spend a lot of time preparing for our spring Nearly New Sale and by the time that's over so is March! Many thanks to all of you who came along and supported us, either buying or selling - we hope you found a bargain!

We did manage to fit in a few other activities for the children with a visit to the playbarn in Sawbridgeworth and Rascals in Stortford, trips to Saffron Walden and Newport playgrounds, a dressing-up session for the pre-schoolers and a messy play session in Henham - as well as all the usual coffee mornings (and not forgetting a bowling night for us grown-ups!).

The middle of the month saw our Open House coffee morning in Stansted and a special cakes and coffee get-together for new and expectant mums.

The arrival of April means spring is in the air and with it our first family pub lunch of the year in Great Chesterford; we might manage to fit another one in during the week as well if we're lucky! We shall also swim at Saffron Walden, play at Stansted Rec' and burn off some excess energy at a 'ride-on-toy' session in Henham. The highlight of the month, however, will be the Easter party at the beginning of the school holidays, with an entertainer, egg hunt and lots of party food.

On a more serious note we shall also be hosting a Save a Life first aid evening to learn the basic lifesaving techniques for children.

Our regular coffee mornings are as follows:

Monday 10.00 - 11.30 am Expectant Mums and Under Ones  
Wednesday 10.00 - 11.30 am Toddlers  
Friday 1.30 - 3.00 pm Pre-schoolers

All parents/carers are most welcome. Please come along and meet new people. For all details of the above venues please see the parish noticeboards. If you wish to know more about the NCT, ante-natal classes and/or are interested in joining please speak to Wendy on 813387.

Cheryl Salmon



# Profile No. 22

## Lily Brett

Lily Brett, who celebrates her 100th birthday on April 11th, is the oldest resident of Stansted.

She was born in Manuden, the second of four children. Her father, a gardener, died young when she was only seven, leaving her mother to bring up the family alone which she managed to do by working daily in the laundry at both Hassobury and Manuden Houses. Lily and her brothers and sisters all went to the village school in Manuden, Lily's sister leaving at 13 to work in service in a house in Saffron Walden. Unfortunately the job was short lived as she was soon sacked - for leaving finger-marks on a door. Lily left school at 14 to become a maid of all work in a Manuden household. She moved jobs a number of times in the area lured by the prospect of a rise in her wages from about 2/6s (12.5p) per week to 3/- (15p). She later went to work in Bournemouth before returning when she was about 30 to work for the Golds and the Frasers at The Limes in Silver Street. Here she was one of seven live-in staff looking after a family of only three. However, at the weekends the house came alive when her employers entertained their friends to shooting and tennis parties. These weekends were hectic but obviously tremendous fun and much enjoyed by the staff too.



During the war Lily left Stansted to work at two local RAF Stations, preparing food for the Irish navvies employed to build the runways. Lily later returned to The Limes where she remained until her retirement and she still keeps in touch with the family who often visit her when they happen to be in the area.

As a child, Lily travelled widely throughout the British Isles thanks to an uncle who worked on the railways. She and her sister were often invited to spend the holidays with him and

his family and she considers herself very lucky to have had this unusual opportunity to visit so many different places in her youth. She attributes her love of travelling and her independence to these journeys. While working at The Limes she often accompanied the family when they moved round the country attending social events. Her memories stretch back to the early days of road travel when, for example, getting to Henley for the Regatta was a real expedition.

For many years after her retirement she continued to travel, holidaying with friends on the continent. One of her most memorable trips was a three-week visit to the Holy Land journeying by train across Europe to Genoa and then by sea through the Mediterranean to Haifa stopping off at various ports on the way. Her diary records sights, sounds, memorable people, the high price of refreshments in the tourist cafes, accommodation of variable standard and her impressions of all the wonderful places she and her friends visited.

At home in Stansted she was a regular worshipper at St John's Church and is remembered there today.

Lily still lives on her own in her cosy cottage. She attributes here beautiful legs and her general good health to the fact that she has always been active and still goes upstairs to bed. She feels her longevity may have something to do with the glass of sherry she has daily before lunch and certainly has a lot to do with keeping herself busy. She likes doing difficult puzzles, reading the newspaper and watching television. Although no longer able to tend her garden, her sitting room is always full of flowers and pot plants and when the weather is warm enough she enjoys sitting outside in the sun.

We are delighted to congratulate Lily on attaining her centenary and to share her memories.

Elizabeth Wagener





# Stansted Junior Football Club

Sponsors: Ampersand Associates, D.C. Poulton & Sons, Leonische, Diamond Associates, 'blue post production' Urbanhurst.

Founded 1986 Affiliation No. MY00969 Essex F.A.

Welcome once again to the Junior's page. Its good to see that spring is coming and that our pitches are back to a reasonable condition. Unfortunately due to the heavy rain we had to call off a number of games over the past month. Saying that we have had a few games reversed so now the teams are well on the way to completing their season. I had hoped to include a photograph of our trophies from last season, but I am still waiting for them to be returned. Each team has done remarkably well this season and although none has won any of their respective leagues, it is great to see that all of them have stayed well clear of the bottom of their leagues as well.

Sadly the club were mentioned in the local paper with regards to a litter problem up at our Bentfield End pitches. I am happy to report that since that article I have spoken to the local Parish Council. They informed me that they inspected the area and are more than happy with the pitches and surrounding areas as far as the club is concerned. Although litter is a never-ending problem suffered in every community, it seemed that the club was being singled out. We do encourage all the boys and the parents to use the litter bags we take up to each home game, and happily they comply with this. It is a strict policy of the club, to tidy up after using any pitch, whether it be in Stansted or indeed at an away game. The only problem the club have up at Bentfield End, is the continual problem of dog mess. It's bad enough that careless owners let their pets foul a public area, but they seem to do it purposely on the pitches. This is a real health hazard to the players, so to avoid any accidents all the managers take a shovel and bags to the pitches so they can clean up after others; furthermore, they often pick up bottles, cans, etc. which have been left on the play area.

Anyway happier news: Mike Moralee and Ken Makepeace are now preparing to start the new under 6's squad, starting after Easter. If you are interested please call Mike (814603) or Ken (816133) and they will tell you more about the training etc. Remember girls are allowed to come along; in fact it's good to see that the number of girls playing 'Mini Soccer' is growing. It is not until they are much older that the rules change, and then they can hopefully find an all-girl team. Also just to remind you that our presentation night is on May 13th up at Mountfitchet High School. If you would like to donate a prize or place an advert in the programme please call Luke (813769). All the money we raise goes to the benefit of all the boys at the club.

More news includes the club being involved with the local History Group who have kindly asked us to send in photographs of the teams in action. And we are also on the net! Check out these sites : [www.stanstedjfc.freereserve.co.uk](http://www.stanstedjfc.freereserve.co.uk) and [www.soccer-fanzine.co.uk](http://www.soccer-fanzine.co.uk). The first site is the club's official site (thanks to Glyn Warwick) which includes news about all the teams, and the second is the club's Fanzine (The boy done good !) getting a few pages from Sky Sports.

Anyway that is all for this month. I hope you all have a great Easter and in the next issue of The Link I shall try my hardest to get some photographs in!

All the Best

Luke Pearman

Club Chairman - Tony Matthews Tel: 814668

Club Secretary - Mike Moralee Tel: 814603

Social Secretary - Luke Pearman Tel: 813769



Since Christmas the children and staff at Rainbow have been rushed off their feet. There is always something new happening. The children had so much fun learning about the Chinese New Year; they created dragons and even tried out new skills in the use of chopsticks. What fun!

At the moment the children's topic is "Our Village" which includes visits out and about. The Post Office was inundated with children buying stamps, putting them on their very own letters, posting them then watching the very helpful postman empty the post box into his sack, followed by the letters magically arriving at their very own front doors a few days later. They have also visited the windmill which is where they begin to learn their future bread making skills.

Shrove Tuesday also happened at Rainbow with a pancake race and also a chance for all the parents to get to know each other a bit better with a coffee morning.

If you would like any information regarding Rainbow Pre-School please give Alison a ring on 816188. Please look out for and support us in our forthcoming events such as Easter Party, Sponsored Wheels and more wine tasting in the summer. Thanks.

Liz





# St Clare Hospice

In the four years since the launch of St Clare's capital appeal, we have gone from occupying a converted farmhouse surrounded by a decaying orchard, to having a purpose-built extension which is four times the size of the original building with attractive gardens. This is in addition to all the services previously provided which we continue to offer, making the Hospice far more than just beds. These include a 24-hour helpline, day care, equipment loans, and bereavement counselling.

However, this is not the end of our fundraising. It is the start of an expensive new era. The Hospice must raise most of the estimated £1 million needed per annum to run our full range of services. This means that your continued support is vital.

An easy way to make a donation is by sending an annual membership fee to help offset the cost of the three Hospice newsletters issued per year. In 1999, we raised £8,500 this way. Please help us to exceed this total by making a contribution and sending £5 or more. We appreciate that not all our supporters can afford to do this, so please rest assured that no payment is needed to guarantee the continued receipt of our newsletter. Nor do we ask our Life Members to take out annual membership although of course, every extra penny does help.

St Clare is your hospice serving your area although we sincerely hope that you will never need to use our services.

For the past few years, St Clare Hospice has been very fortunate in recruiting runners for the London Marathon. Between them, our runners have raised a considerable amount to help towards our work and the cost of completing our new in-patient unit. Many will be competing on our behalf again and I would like to introduce you to one of them.

Caroline Bore is employed by St Clare as Fundraising Assistant. She is 49 years of age, married to Alan, and together they are members of the Harlow Running Club. Caroline has completed 14 marathons including the London and Harlow.

Over the years she has lost dear friends to various illnesses and would like to make this London Marathon a special event by raising funds to enable those not so fortunate as herself to receive the care they deserve at St Clare Hospice.

Caroline will be doing all the hard work but you could help her in a special way by sponsoring her efforts for just a few pence per mile or an amount for the completed course (26 miles). If you would like to help, there is no need to send money now.

To sponsor Caroline or to make a donation direct to St Clare Hospice, please contact Jo Price - Fundraising Administrator or Penny Sturdy - Fundraising Manager at: St Clare Hospice Centre, Hastingwood Road, Hastingwood, Essex CM17 9JX, or telephone 01279 413590 or email to [enqs@stclare-hospice.co.uk](mailto:enqs@stclare-hospice.co.uk)

## Stansted Tennis Club



### Junior Coaching

Chris Hollis continues with his Saturday morning coaching sessions for 7-14 year olds. If you would like to join in there are limited places available so please contact Chris on 01279 466973.

### Used Tennis Balls

These are still available at the very reasonable price of £1 for a tube of 4 (very popular with dog owners). Please contact Janet Hollis on 812073 if you would like to buy some.

### Tennis Club Garden

The Committee recently met with the Parish Council to discuss plans for improving the garden surrounding the courts. We are hoping that work will start quite soon.

**ATTENTION ALL GARDEN LOVERS - Please bring your own bags and help yourself to as much leaf mould (excellent quality) as you like from the huge pile in the corner outside the tennis courts (adjacent to the football pitch).**

### Spring Tournament

The opening doubles tournament of the 2000 season will take place on Sunday 16th April. Please look out for further details on the Club noticeboard.

If you would like to join Stansted Tennis Club please contact the Membership Secretary, Kate Rutter, on 813053. For any other enquiries please contact either Janet Hollis (Chairman) on 812073 or Richard Mott (Secretary) on 466348.





## STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Thinking back to what our particular part of the world was like 250 million years ago certainly put into perspective our place in history! The underlying geology of the area was explained by Professor Peter Rawson in his illustrated talk to the March meeting, "Stansted, the last 250 million years". Successive floodings and ice coverings laid down deposits of chalk, clay and flint and affected the climate, as did the shifting of land on the earth's surface caused by movement of the tectonic plates. The result of this meant that there was no good building stone here, so when mankind settled, buildings were of flint, brick and wood. An absorbing subject clearly presented and greatly enjoyed by a well-attended meeting.

Our next meetings are on Thursday 6th April on "The Blyth Family" by Patrick Streeter and on Thursday 4th May we have our A.G.M. followed by a presentation arranged by Peter Sanders. Both at 8 pm in the Day Centre.

Peggy Honour  
813160



## Huw Johnson Club

We are very grateful to our many benefactors who have recently supported us with generous donations. Our thanks go to the Stansted Society of Friends, Waitrose in Saffron Walden and others who wish to remain anonymous.

We all wish Vikki Nankivell the very best for her tandem sky dive which will take place on April 15th. Vikki's sponsor money will be donated to our holiday fund and we admire her courage for undertaking this event. Thank you very much indeed Vikki.

We had a very good time at Joanne's birthday disco in February and the fancy dress costumes were excellent. Cowboys - pirates - Red Riding Hood plus her granny and characters from the 1920s discoed the night away. We plan to do it all over again in March to celebrate Andrew's birthday. Thank you to Gary King for entertaining our members so well. He certainly keeps us "Oldies" young.

Marion G Johnson

## STANSTED CONSERVATIVES



### Social Events

Thursday 13th April 2000 - **Social Supper** in the Mill House Restaurant, Lower Street, 8.00 pm. Fixed menu and wine provided. Only thirty-two seats are available. Book early. Further details and bookings from 812471/814440.

Friday 19th May 2000 - A "**Pub Evening**" at the "Rose and Crown", Bentfield End. Begins at 8.00 pm. Drinks and sandwiches. Further details and bookings from 812471/814440.



## Royal British Legion Women's Section

Normal business at our February meeting included congratulations by our President and the gift of a beautiful azalea to Doris Thistle in celebration of her 50 year's membership of the Women's Section and her service on the committee for over 20 of those years. We also welcomed a new member. Edna and Alan Wright were our speakers and they provided some fascinating slides of their visit to Switzerland to celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

Our next branch meeting will be on Thursday 20th April in the Day Centre at 7.30 pm when our speaker will be Frances Spalding

.Pat Clower



## MOUNTFITCHET GARDEN CLUB

At our March meeting, Mrs Fotherby from Saffron Walden, spoke about "Flowers in History" ranging from the early Olympics to the Egyptians down to the French and the Fleur de Lys and the English Rose. The members' competition this month was won by Betty Waterman with her arrangement of Spring Flowers.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 5th April at the Day Centre at 8 pm. The speaker will be Mr J Mead talking on "Flowers for and preparation of Hanging Baskets". This is also the Annual General Meeting and we hope all members will make an effort to attend. The club is keen to welcome volunteers on to the committee; this is your chance!

Derek Francis



## IT'S SAFE - WELL, ISN'T IT ?

Of course it's safe, whatever 'it' is, provided you define 'safe' and 'it' is generally accepted as safe rather than dangerous.

Those of you who rise early and listen to the farming programme that precedes the 6 am news on Radio 4 will only be too aware that safety in farming and related activities is a relative term.

First, there was BSE, now there is the issue of GMOs, not that BSE has gone away; far from it. It is now openly admitted that because of the long and variable incubation time, we frankly do not know whether, in the years to come, there will be a rising number of new variant CJD cases that will be presented. And, it is now clear that however careful we are in the UK on slaughter policy and tracking of animals, cases of BSE are regularly occurring in France, Belgium, The Netherlands and Denmark with further cases of infection suspected in Germany. Whether these arise from earlier UK live cattle exports to these countries for breeding purposes or from contaminated feedstuffs indigenously produced in the countries is unsure. Either way, there is clearly still a risk from BSE and its human form, new variant CJD. This means that cattle meat, beef, cowmeat, call it what you will, from at least some parts of Europe cannot be called absolutely safe, although the risk of infection of humans with new variant CJD is slight in view of the precautions now being imposed.

Of course, the GMO topic will not go away and it was hardly helped by Tony Blair's apparent change of mind on the issue which boiled down to giving the customer, you and me in the supermarket, the choice between GMO and non-GMO foods. You can be certain that the GMO lobby will ensure that GMO foods will be cheaper and more attractively presented than their non-GMO counterparts and this alone will encourage the public to buy the GMO foods, particularly if one doesn't have an abundance of money to spend. There remains also the *flora* and *fauna* issue in the UK and Europe, where agriculture has to exist alongside everything else in the countryside. In the USA, this is not the case, where vast tracts of land are given over to crop production and much of the naturally occurring *flora* and *fauna* has long since vanished. So, are GMO foods really safe ?

A more local issue is that of safety surrounding our local airport - the Korean Air 747 freighter crash in Hatfield Forest and, more recently, the Afghan Air 727 highjack. Aircraft safety is undoubtedly very high but failures and errors will occur as in the case of the freighter crash and passenger screening at airports is sometimes lax so hijack problems will arise. The problem is not so much that a freighter or hijacked aircraft will descend upon you from a great height, but that under commercial pressure to keep an airport open during an incident, as happened at Stansted, flights are re-routed to turn more sharply away from the straight line of the runway

during takeoff and landing. It is, of course, well known that the most critical phases in an aircraft's flight from a safety viewpoint are takeoff and landing. To add to this by introducing sharper than normal turning on takeoff and landing reduces the safety in these critical phases. So it was untrue for the airport spokesman to state that safety was not compromised by the temporary and very annoying flight re-routing that took place at the time of the recent hijack.

And so the arguments go on ...

As the car salesman said "It's the safest car in the world and it will do a ton and a half up the M11". But, should he tell you to make sure you don't attempt to turn sharp corners at that speed, otherwise you might wake up in hospital or not wake up at all !

Safety, of course, is a relative issue and never absolute.

Tacitus II

(PS: Can anyone sell me the depleted uranium from the crashed freighter; I want to try making a bomb in my garage. It'll be quite safe, relatively speaking - honest, guv.)



## STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

April sees the start of another open season for the windmill. The Easter holiday and the bank holidays in May see lots of opportunity for people in the village to come and see their own landmark. The dates are given below.

For those interested in helping with the mill, or would like further information, please contact Steve Clements,  
Tel: 816514

Opening Dates for April/May :-

Sunday 2nd April	Sunday 23rd April (Easter)
Monday 24th April	Sunday 30th April
Monday 1st May	Sunday 7th May
Sunday 14th May (National Mills Day)	
Sunday 28th May	Monday 29th May





# Stansted Evening Women's Institute



## NATURE NOTES

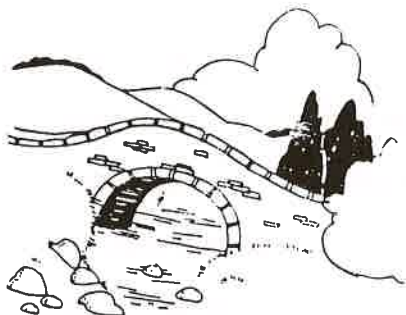
On 18th February we were entertained at our fund raising evening by a group just formed by the Bishop's Stortford Amateur Operatic Society called The Entertainers, who travel to your club or organisation. The first part of the concert was taken up by songs from the Gilbert & Sullivan operettas, the Pirates of Penzance, The Mikado and The Yeoman of the Guard. After refreshments of coffee and homemade cakes the evening continued with songs from the shows such as My Fair Lady, which included 'On the street where you live', 'I'm getting married in the morning' and the innkeepers song from Les Miserables, songs from Oklahoma and Phantom of the Opera and an old favourite with older members, Ivor Novello's 'We'll gather lilacs in the spring again'. All these songs were beautifully performed either in solo, duets or the whole company. It was an excellent evening and raised around £300 for funds.

At our March Meeting Peter Brown gave a talk illustrated with slides called Bridging the Gap, which was about all the bridges in and around Stansted, the details of which one does not always notice when walking or riding over them. We saw photos of the old iron bridge that used to span the railway at the station and which was taken down in 1985 when electrification came. The various bridges that go across Stansted Brook look altogether different when viewed from water level. He also told us about the coal yard next to the railway that used to run a Coal Club in 1902. It had 170 members who paid so much a week for their coal which was then 23'6d per ton.

We are having a jumble sale on April 15th in St John's Hall at 2 pm and a trip to Sandringham is planned for 13th May and is open to the village. See our display on the Village Events page.

Our next meeting is on April 13th when we have Graham Bendall talking to us about A Gamekeeper's Year. Do come and join us in St John's Hall at 7.45 pm.

Kath Johnson  
813225



One of the delights at this time of year is the profusion of wild flowers. In Stansted, we have wet areas by the brook, dry roadside verges and hedge banks, and 3 woods all within walking distance. Where it is damp you will find the bright yellow flowers and heart shaped leaves of the Lesser Celandine, *Ranunculus ficaria*. On hedge banks the dark green, sometimes spotted, leaves of the Cuckoo-pint, *Arum maculatum* are already showing. By April the purple spadix should be visible and its alternative name of Lords and Ladies is very apt. On the verges the finely divided leaves and delicate white flowers of Cow Parsley are appearing and will continue flowering through April to June. Watch for the small white flowers of Hedge Garlic growing by the roadside. Also known as Jack-by-the-hedge, this is the food plant for the orange-tip butterfly, which is one of the earliest butterflies to appear.

However it is in the woods, while the light can reach the ground before the leaves come out, that many early flowers thrive. The delightful wood anemone with its white petals, which appear to have pink/mauve spines when the sun shines through them. At the Aubrey Buxton Reserve there are masses of primroses, *Primula vulgaris*, on the banks of the ponds while at Turner's Spring there are cowslips, *Primula veris*, in the meadow. These have rosettes of rough textured leaves and the deep yellow fragrant flowers grow from a single stem. Also at Turner's Spring, the native oxlips, *Primula elatior*, may be found. These may be distinguished by their one sided cluster of sulphur yellow flowers. There are even hybrids between these three plants, some known as false oxlip and, occasionally, they are found on both reserves.

By April our woods should be carpeted by bluebells. It is not generally realised that on the continent individual bluebells may be found; it is only in Britain that we have them growing naturally in such abundance.

Judith Combes



Primrose  
2-8 in. January-May

DID YOU HEAR....

Due to the drought and the continuing water shortage, it has been necessary to close two lanes of the swimming pool !

*The News Quiz, BBC Radio 4, 18th March 2000*



Mountfitchet High  
School PTA

**FASHION SHOW**  
*Ladies Fashions by Millyplan*

7.30 pm Tue 23 May

Tickets £2 from

Margaret 816718 or Linda 814685

Clothes can be purchased at the show

**DUNMOW ART GROUP**

**26TH ANNUAL  
ART EXHIBITION**

Foakes Hall  
Stortford Road, DUNMOW  
30th April & 1st May  
10 am - 5 pm  
admission 50p  
oaps & children 10p



*Recipe of the Month*

**Buttery Lemon Biscuits**

4 oz / 125 gm softened butter or margarine

3 rounded tablespoons caster sugar

7 oz / 200 gm self raising flour (sieved with 1  
rounded tablespoon custard powder)

few drops lemon juice or lemon essence

little egg yolk

lemon glacé icing

sugar strands

- (a) cream butter and sugar
- (b) add lemon juice & flour mixture
- (c) mix well
- (d) add sufficient yolk to make stiff dough
- (e) roll out to ¼ inch thick
- (f) cut into 2 inch rounds
- (g) place on lightly greased & floured baking dish
- (h) bake for 15 mins gas mark 3 / 160°C / 325°F
- (i) when cool, cover with icing & sugar strands

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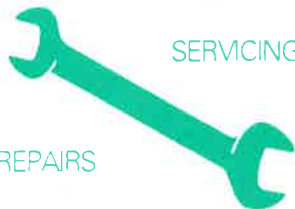


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